

## **Northeast Region News Release**

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For Immediate Release

Edie Shean-Hammond 215-597-0865

### **Maria Burks Named as Interim Executive Director For National Parks of New York Harbor**

**Philadelphia, PA**—National Park Service (NPS) northeast regional director Marie Rust has appointed Cape Cod National Seashore (NS) superintendent Maria Burks to a four-month detail as executive director of the National Parks of New York Harbor. Expected to begin her new assignment on June 1, she succeeds Jim Pepper who will again serve as Rust's strategic planning director. Mike Murray, deputy superintendent since 1997, will take the helm of Cape Cod NS in Burks's absence.

"With the reopening of Lady Liberty's doors, preparations at Federal Hall for the Republican National Convention, and other major challenges facing our parks this summer, Maria Burks is the right person to lead the National Parks of New York Harbor now. She not only is a very skilled park manager, but she also has excellent skills in building public-private partnerships," said regional director Rust in announcing her decision. "I am fully confident that Mike Murray will manage Cape Cod very well while Maria is away," Rust added.

"I'm looking forward to this assignment," Burks said. "I know that addressing the challenges in New York and New Jersey will broaden my abilities to assist Cape Cod and other parks in the future," she commented.

Since 1995 Burks has served as Cape Cod NS superintendent. Headquartered at South Wellfleet (MA), the seashore comprises more than 43,000 acres park land stretching from Chatham to Provincetown. Burks joined the NPS as a park ranger in 1973 at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia (PA). Ten years later she accepted an assignment as Bay District ranger at Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco.

In 1989, she was named superintendent of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park (VA). Before her tour at Cape Cod, she worked at NPS headquarters in Washington, DC, on a number of national internal reform projects. Burks holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania. She enjoys hiking, gardening, and the study of foreign languages.

National Parks of New York Harbor comprise the more than 26,000-acre Gateway National Recreation Area, Federal Hall National Memorial on Wall Street, Castle Clinton National Monument in Battery Park, Hamilton Grange National Memorial in Harlem, General Grant National Memorial in Riverside Park, Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site (20<sup>th</sup> St.), St. Paul's Church National Historic Site in Eastchester, Governor's Island National Monument, and the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island. Together these parks receive more than 20 million visits a year.

(NPS)